

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY UPDATE

17 February 2016

1 Introduction

This report summarises the activities of each overview and scrutiny committee during the January meetings. The individual reports from the scrutiny chairs are referenced as follows:

Section 2	Cllr Brian Oosthuysen, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee
Section 3	Cllr Tim Harman, Chair of the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Section 4	Cllr Iain Dobie, Chair of the Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Section 5	Cllr Robert Bird, Chair of the Environment and Communities Scrutiny Committee
Section 6	Cllr Paul Hodgkinson, Chair of Economic Growth Overview and Scrutiny Committee

2 Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee (25 January 2016) – Cllr Brian Oosthuysen

2.1 Recommendation from Environment and Communities Scrutiny Committee

As detailed later in this report under the relevant committee heading, the Environment and Communities Scrutiny Committee have recommended to full Council that:

Gloucestershire County Council send a letter to the Secretary of State requesting that the process for exploring hydraulic fracturing in Gloucestershire be halted.

2.2 Draft Medium Term Financial Strategy

The Head of Financial Management, provided members with an update on the draft Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and the most recent financial forecasts. The draft budget needed to be considered in the context of the 2015/16 financial position. The Adults budget had a forecast variance of £3.9m (2.6% of the budget) and Children and Families budget a variance of £2.36m (2.4% of the budget).

The spending review in December announced the ability to raise 2% social care levy. Two budgets had been issued for Consultation; Option 1 based on 1.99% Council Tax

increase (total budget £411.66m) and Option 2 based on the Council Tax increase and 2% National Social Care Levy (total budget £416.35m). Members were shown draft budget summaries for both options which showed cost reductions and cost increases. The full amount of the social care levy if implemented would be added to the Adults budget as demonstrated in Option 2.

Following the meeting, members compiled a report detailing the budget scrutiny process and reporting observations on the draft MTFs to Cabinet. This was presented at the Cabinet meeting on 3 February 2016.

3 Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee (14 January 2016) – Cllr Tim Harman

3.1 What do we do to help young people into employment, particularly the most vulnerable

A key priority for the council is to help all young people, particularly those who are more vulnerable, to make a successful transition to adult life including gaining employment. The committee was pleased to welcome Peter Holmes (Head of Extended Learning), Ellen Sanders (Youth Support Team (YST), Prospects), Vikki Walters (Employment Commissioner) and Charlotte Clark (Apprentice in the Participation Team), to the committee to inform and engage with members on this matter.

The committee was informed about the Youth Employment and Skills Campaign (YES), the Work it Out Project, and the Employment Offer for Young People with Learning Disabilities. The presentations are available on the council website for information. Members were impressed by the hard work and commitment shown by officers. It was clear that this is a group of officers who do not give up and if one approach does not work then they will try another – recognising that all young people are individuals with individual responses to their care situation or learning disability.

Charlotte was a good example of how effective these initiatives can be. Coming through the Work it Out Project, which provides a range of work experience opportunities, her determination and application impressed the Participation Team such that, following her work experience, she was offered an Apprenticeship in the Team. Charlotte was clear that without the support of the YST, and her Foster Carer, she might not have been successful.

The opportunity and support provided made a real difference to her and she is very determined to be successful in her Apprenticeship.

When discussing the activity in place to support young people with a learning disability the committee was pleased to note that many employers (now) recognise that people with a learning disability can be a valuable addition to their workforce. It was also good to see that the aspirations of these young people are being encouraged and supported. Members were shown a video clip ‘When I Grow Up I Want To Be’ made by pupils at the Milestone School

in Gloucester which gave a very powerful message that disabled young people have the same dreams about work as everyone else.

The committee was very impressed with how our vulnerable young people are being supported and thanked the officers for their commitment and dedication to these young people. The committee agreed that it will revisit this work in 12 months to monitor progress.

3.2 Safeguarding – Planning and Commissioning

OSMC members will know that the committee uses a safeguarding framework to try and ensure that the committee engages with the breadth of activity that falls within the safeguarding umbrella. I recommend that OSMC members read this report from the Head of Quality, Children and Young People, as it clearly shows that the council works closely with its partners to commission services that are effective and inform and support children and young people effectively.

A significant factor in this area of work is how involved children and young people are. By directly engaging and listening to children and young people important changes are being achieved – from redesigning the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board website to be more child friendly to improving how safeguarding training is designed. The committee was also informed of the experience of one of our Ambassadors, where her life was in effect turned around, because the support worker listened to what she had to say and worked to build a package of support that met her needs. This support and encouragement was what enabled her to progress to become an Ambassador.

3.3. Revenue Monitoring

It was clear from this report that this budget area remains under significant pressure. Despite these pressures the required savings remain on target. Home to School Transport is an issue that has been of concern to members for many years. Committee members acknowledged that officers have worked hard to achieve savings through reviewing policy and procedures. Members who sit on these panels were clear that when they hear transport appeals they do so on a case by case basis and are never informed of the costs associated with the case. Decisions are therefore made on the merit of the case only.

3.4 Qtr2 2015/16 Performance Report

Whilst the report does include areas of good performance and progress, for example with regard to SEND and NEET, the Director of Children's Services was clear that the system is under significant pressure. The volume of activity and demand relating to child protection and care proceedings is increasing. The council has, and continues to, work hard to recruit new social workers but with many of these being newly qualified this will not make an immediate difference to reducing caseloads. As previously reported there are cases that are unallocated

which is not the best for the child and their family. Much of this increased activity relates to a better understanding of the factors relating to neglect and child sexual exploitation, and a more robust approach to managing these issues. However there is also a link to increased Police activity with regard to Domestic Abuse. The Director assured members that there were areas of good practice, but wanted to be clear that the service was under significant pressure, and that corrective action was not a quick fix. The committee thanked the Director for her honesty.

3.5 Capital Monitoring

The committee receives this report on twice a year. Following the publication of the agenda officers had adjusted the draft capital programme and the new draft was tabled at the meeting. This would be received by Cabinet on 3 February 2016. The committee noted the report.

4 Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee (12 January 2016) – Cllr Iain Dobie

4.1 NHS111

The committee was pleased to welcome two representatives from CareUK (provider of NHS111 in Gloucestershire, Swindon, Wiltshire, South Gloucestershire, BaNES, Bristol and North Somerset) to inform and engage with members on this matter. NHS111 is an important gateway into health services. There has been concern regarding NHS111 performance against targets since the implementation of this service in February 2013. CareUK has previously attended the committee to respond to questions on this matter and it was important to identify what progress has been made. CareUK gave a detailed presentation (the slides are available on the council's website) which demonstrated the actions that have been taken to address performance issues. The data was showing that there has been some improvement and that CareUK is performing above the England average against some targets. It was interesting to note that the recent flooding has impacted on performance as this caused communication outages for some providers and therefore calls were automatically transferred to other NHS111 providers

Workforce factors are a significant issue for CareUK as with other Health providers. CareUK is undertaking a large amount of activity to improve the recruitment and retention of Clinical Advisers, and will also be working with NHS England (NHSE) on the NHS111 Workforce Project.

Workforce Planning in the Health Service is already on the committee's work plan for this year. The challenges in this area are a real risk to the NHS, and the committee will need to consider how best to respond. This is a national issue cutting across all aspects of the NHS and the committee may feel that it needs to write to the Secretary

of State for Health to ascertain what plans are in place to address this matter in order to 'fill the gap'.

Whilst recognising that CareUK are working hard to improve performance the committee remains concerned and will continue to monitor activity through the regular performance reports.

4.2 Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group (GCCG) Performance Report

The report demonstrates that there is a lot of good performance against targets. However, there remain concerns with performance against some targets including cancer wait times, for those people at risk of a stroke who experience a TIA (Transient Ischaemic Attack), and the 4 hour A & E target at both Acute Hospitals. Members wanted to understand whether the learning from last year's major internal incident had been implemented as requested by the committee. It was good to hear that although there had been significant pressure on the system at the start of the previous week, with some parts of the system being at red and black levels, the escalation process, and the improved joint working, had brought the system back into equilibrium by Friday. The committee also received a presentation which demonstrated the improvements made to the escalation process. These slides are available on the council website.

4.3 Qtr2 2015/2016 Adult Social Care and Public Health Performance Report

This report shows that there is a mixed picture of performance. It was good to note that in line with the intention to support more people to live independently that the number of people (over 65) being admitted to residential care is reducing. The good work with regard to supporting people with learning disabilities into employment continues, and this approach is now being extended to include people with a mental health problems. Performance against target for the reassessment of care needs continues to be a concern, and officers are now looking at whether the model in use is appropriate.

Members are concerned with performance against drug and alcohol targets. However this service is in the process of being recommissioned; and following its recent workshop, looking in detail at this issue, the committee feel satisfied that the Director of Public Health is managing this position appropriately.

4.4 Healthwatch Gloucestershire (HWG) Patient and Public Feedback Qtr 2

This report provides the committee with qualitative information which offers a different perspective to the hard data provided in the performance reports.

4.5 HWG Discharge Process Task Group Report

This report looked at the impact on the patient and their family/carer. The methodology used by HWG does not make the findings statistically significant but does provide a helpful and informative insight. This report should be read alongside the overarching publication on this matter by Heathwatch England.

The committee was pleased to note the positive responses, by the commissioners and providers, to the recommendations in the report; and it was clear from these responses that a lot of activity to improve the discharge experience had already been identified and actioned. HWG will review action against their recommendations in 3 months, and the committee will be interested to note the outcome of the review.

It is also important to note that in terms of delayed transfers of care (DTC) Gloucestershire's performance is better than the England average and the best in the South West.

4.6. HWG Patient Transport Task Group Report

The committee is due to meet with Arriva Transport Solutions at its meeting in July 2016 and it was agreed that the findings and recommendations identified in this report will be used to inform that debate.

4.7 Information Reports

The committee receives reports from the Director of Public Health, the Director of Adult Services, and the Chair and Accountable Officer of the GCCG at each committee meeting. These provide helpful updates and information on current issues and are helpful in identifying issues for inclusion on the committee's workplan, for a more detailed discussion at the next work planning meeting.

5 Environment and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee (13 January 2016) - Cllr Rob Bird

5.1 Fracking (Hydraulic Fracturing)

At the Gloucestershire County Council meeting on 23 October 2015, Councillors referred Motion 756, detailing concerns about the impact of fracking, (hydraulic fracturing for shale gas), on climate change and on the Forest of Dean District, to the Environment and Communities Scrutiny Committee to consider.

At the committee's request, a member briefing was held at Shire Hall at 10.00 am, prior to consideration of the motion at the planned committee meeting later the same

day. The aim of the briefing was to assist members with their understanding of issues relating to hydraulic fracturing and other energy extraction options, (unconventional hydrocarbons), before debating the council motion. Background information and links to the power-point presentations at the briefing are available on request.

Acknowledging the changes in circumstance since consideration of the motion at the full council meeting in October 2015, notably that the Department of Energy and Climate Change, (DECC), had announced licences for 159 areas in the UK, including 5 licences across Gloucestershire, the committee concluded that, in its original form, the proposal, 'for the council to write to the Secretary of State to remove the licensing areas within Gloucestershire' was no longer applicable.

Several members believed there was still merit in the council writing to the Secretary of State and proposed that the committee make a recommendation to full council proposing that a letter be sent to the Secretary of State on behalf of the council requesting a halt to the exploration of hydraulic carbons across Gloucestershire.

Some members of the committee did not support this proposal, stating that they preferred to seek an alternative course of action. With a small majority, it was agreed the committee would make a recommendation to this meeting as part of the formal scrutiny reporting process to full council.

5.2 Chief Fire Officer Report

The committee received an update from the Chief Fire Officer on the portfolio of services provided by the Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service (GFRS) on behalf of Gloucestershire County Council. Members noted progress on the GFRS Integrated Risk Management Plan 2015-18, including proposals relating to Cirencester and Painswick Fire Stations following full public consultation. Having considered the update, including the outcomes of the consultation, the committee indicated its support for the proposals.

5.3 Commissioning Directors Report

Full details of the Commissioning Directors Report, (item 6 of the agenda), including an update on the Government's Department of Energy and Climate Change Consultation on onshore oil and gas licensing can be viewed at the following link:

<http://glostext.gloucestershire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=673&MId=8223&Ver=4>

5.4 Task Group Update

The committee received updates on the following scrutiny task group reviews: -

a) Access to and from the Forest of Dean

At its task group meeting in September, members received a presentation from Highways England on the lifespan of the first Severn Bridge and information on the future of the Severn Crossings. The task group agreed to utilise the Forest of Dean extract of the Gloucestershire Local Transport Plan Consultation Document 2015-2031 to progress the review.

At its meeting on 18 January 2016, the task group received a presentation from Monmouthshire Council on the Chepstow Bypass and an update on the A40 at Highnam. Representatives from Network Rail and Arriva Trains attended the task group meeting on 4 February 2016, with an update on the future of Lydney Railway Station, the potential for a new railway station, electrification of the Severn Tunnel, and other issues relating to the rail infrastructure for the Forest of Dean.

A formal submission to the public consultation on the Gloucestershire's Draft Local Transport Plan 2015-31 was submitted on 5 February 2016.

The task group final report, including recommendations, to be presented to the parent committee and Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee in March 2016.

b) A429 Fosse Way

At the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee meeting on 20 November 2015, it was agreed that a scrutiny task group be established to look at safety and congestion issues on the A429 Fosse Way, with the Gloucestershire County Councillors whose divisions were located in the Cotswold District invited to join the task group.

At its meeting in December, the task group appointed Cllr Nigel Moor as Chairman, and agreed to manage its work plan by combining issues into themed topics. An interim report to be presented to the Environment and Communities Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 9 March 2016, with a final report, including recommendations, to be presented at the committee meeting on 18 May 2016.

The outcomes of the interim report to be fed into the Local Transport Plan and presented to Cabinet at its meeting on 18 April 2016. The final report, including recommendations, to be presented to Cabinet on 8 June 2016.

c) Cotswold Flood Action Group

Cotswold Flood Project Group meetings to be arranged in early April 2016, followed by the first of two bi-annual Action Group meetings in late April or early May 2016.

5.5 Work Plan

The committee noted a proposal from Cllr Iain Dobie for the council to consider appointing a Member Champion from which to promote the benefits of cycling in Gloucestershire. The committee also considered a proposal from Cllr Dobie proposing that the committee consider replacing the council's diesel fleet with less damaging automotive technology. Speaking in support of the proposal, the committee requested a paper on the Gloucestershire County Council's activities to support and promote electric vehicle use in Gloucestershire at the committee meeting on 18 May 2016. It was noted that the Climate Change Task Group would be presenting its final report, including recommendations, to the committee meeting on 9 March 2016

6 Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee (9 December 2015) – Cllr Paul Hodgkinson

6.1 Work Plan

At an earlier committee meeting, it was agreed that the committee would combine several specific issues into combined topics, to form the following work plan items: -

- a) Employment skills/devolution
- b) Promoting Gloucestershire/supporting businesses
- c) Next generation communication technology (including Broadband and Mobile Phone issues)

In addition to four scheduled meetings per year, (to coincide with Joint Committee meetings), the committee decided to schedule an additional two scrutiny meetings per year for the committee to consider specific topics and areas of interest.

6.2 Employment skills

The first 'specific topic' meeting was held on Monday 16 November 2015, with employment skills as the main item for discussion. The aim of the meeting was to assist members in their understanding of the detail relating to the implementation and likely impacts of the Berkeley Green, STEM and Cyber Skills investments, and to consider how growth deal projects might help in addressing gaps in educational skills. Presentations were received from South Gloucestershire College (Berkeley Green Project), Gloscol (STEM Project) and the University of Gloucestershire (Cyber Skills Centre Project). At the committee meeting on 9 December 2015, members

considered a series of reports presented to the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee earlier that day, including updates on the work of the Gfirst LEP, Gloucestershire Infrastructure Investment Plan and Growth Fund Pipeline Project.

6.3 Community Pubs

The committee also received an update from Cllr Barry Kirby, Chairman of the Community Pubs Scrutiny Task Group Review. In presenting the task group's interim report, Cllr Kirby informed members that, at the full council meeting on 26 November 2014, members had supported a motion for the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee to explore ways in which the council might support local pubs and restaurants, including a proposal for the creation of pub hubs in various communities throughout Gloucestershire.

Further to discussions with the not for profit organisation, 'Pub is the Hub', and a visit by Cllr Barry Kirby to the Pub is the Hub launch in Devon on 3 November 2015, the organisation met with the task group on Friday 20 November 2015 to give an overview of how the organisation might assist with the review, including offering to undertake strategic mapping of Gloucestershire to identify priority areas.

The 'Pub is the Hub' organisation has undertaken work with several other local authorities over the past 15 years, focussing on supporting and encouraging local pubs to diversify and better serve local communities. The organisation also provides workshops and assistance to local communities to apply for funding, including seeking grants from the Community Services Fund, (providing the named projects are seen to be providing needed services). In terms of funding, Pub is the Hub offered to contribute £3.5k towards completion of a strategic mapping analysis of Gloucestershire. (This was later increased to £5750).

After an in-depth discussion, the committee agreed to formalise the offer made by Pub is the Hub to bear the cost of analysis work of 'all rural services and pubs in Gloucestershire' to the value of up to £5750. Reminding members that the work would be undertaken at the request of, and on behalf of, Gloucestershire County Council, it was suggested lead officers, (overseen by Strategic Needs Analysis Manager, Neil Dixon), should meet with Pub is the Hub to discuss the proposed arrangements, and to consider what work the council might be able to assist with. A meeting was held on 8 February 2016.

6.4 Mobile phone coverage in Gloucestershire

Currently maintaining a watching brief on the status of mobile phone coverage in Gloucestershire, it was suggested that at one of its 'additional' committee meetings, (originally scheduled for 3 February 2016), the committee would invite leading Mobile Network Operators to give an update on current issues.

During the discussion, it was agreed that the committee would send a letter to the Minister of State for Culture and Digital Economy, expressing its concerns about the Government's roll out and delivery of the Mobile Infrastructure Project (MIP). Furthermore, it was suggested Gloucestershire County Councillors be invited to provide evidence about mobile phone coverage within their divisions, and to make enquiries with town and parish council's about relevant issues within their wards that might assist in developing an evidence base for the committee to refer to at the meeting. The meeting originally scheduled for 3 February 2016 has been rescheduled to April 2016.

6.5 Apprenticeships

The committee received an update on the progress of the recommendations from the Apprenticeship Task Group. Further updates to be provided.

In considering items to add to the committee work plan, a member requested that the committee give a steer on how it wanted to consider promoting Gloucestershire as a more desirable destination to live, work and play. It was suggested this item be considered at the committee meeting on 16 March 2016.